

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for applying a coating to a food product comprising:
 - a first container for storing the coating;
 - a second container for holding at least a portion of the coating prior to deposition of the coating on the food product and comprising at least one protrusion; and
 - at least one wheel comprising at least two coaxial disks, wherein the two disks are spaced apart to form an inner space, and wherein the two outer faces of each disk comprise at least a portion of the outer surface of the wheel, and wherein at least a portion of the wheel is positioned in the first container and at least a portion of the wheel is positioned proximate at least a portion of the second container such that upon rotation of the wheel, the wheel transfers coating from the first container to the second container,
wherein the protrusion is adapted to remove coating from the wheel and to deliver the coating to the second container.
2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein coating from the first container is capable of at least partially covering the outer surface of both disks and at least partially filling the inner space between the two disks as the wheel is rotated.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first container is positioned below the second container such that as the wheel is rotated, coating is lifted from the first container to the second container.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second container comprises means to remove coating from the wheel and to deliver the coating to the second container.

Claim 5 (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the second container comprises a first protrusion extending at least partially into the inner space between the two disks.

7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the second container comprises a second protrusion adjacent to the outer face of the first disk and a third protrusion adjacent to the outer face of the second disk.

8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second container comprises slots for each disk, such that as the disks rotate through the second container, coating is removed from the outer surface of both disks and the inner space between the disks and is deposited in the second container.

9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second container comprises a trough.
10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second container comprises an opening adapted to allow at least a portion of the coating to exit from the second container.
11. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the opening in the second container further comprises a ledge extending from the opening.
12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the ledge further comprises at least one vertical face.
13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the opening is adapted to allow a portion of the coating to flow from the second container as a thin curtain of coating.
14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a conveyor to transport at least one food product beneath the second container.
15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the conveyor comprises a plurality of rubber rings.

16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the food product comprises a dough-based product.
17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the food product comprises doughnuts.
18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the coating comprises a sugar-based coating.
19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the coating comprises a glaze mixture.
20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the disks comprise plastic.
21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the disks are up to about 4 feet in diameter.
22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the disks are from about one foot to about two feet in diameter.
23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the wheel comprises at least one additional disk positioned between the first and second disks.

24. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the wheel comprises ~~a~~ an spacer that is positioned between the two disks so as to reduce the inner space between the two disks.
25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second container is adapted to transfer coating to at least one food product in excess and wherein the first container is positioned to receive the excess coating from the second container.
26. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an aperture adapted to drain coating from the first container.
27. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a water jacket that surrounds at least a portion of the first container.
28. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the water jacket is adapted to maintain the temperature of a coating positioned in the first container.
29. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a second wheel, the second wheel comprising at least two coaxial disks, wherein the two disks of the second wheel are spaced apart to form an inner space, and wherein the two outer faces of each disk comprise at least a portion of the outer surface of the second wheel.

30. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 29, wherein the first container comprises a divider positioned to divide the first container into a first sub-container and a second sub-container, wherein at least a portion of the first wheel is positioned in the first sub-container and wherein at least a portion of the second wheel is positioned in the second sub-container.
31. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 30, wherein the divider comprises a closable port adapted allow mixing of the contents of each sub-container.
32. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 29, wherein the second container comprises a panel to divide the second container into a first sub-trough and a second sub-trough, wherein at least a portion of the first wheel is positioned proximate at least part of the first sub-trough and wherein at least a portion of the second wheel is positioned proximate at least part of the second sub-trough.
33. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 32, wherein the second container comprises a slot into which the panel is inserted.
34. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the transfer of the coating from the first container to the second container provides a visual display which may be viewed by an observer.

35. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the visual display comprises a feature which may be displayed in a retail setting.

Claims 36-64 (Canceled)

65. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for the preparation of food products comprising:
a heating unit for warming a pre-cooked food product; and
the apparatus of claim 1. ~~an apparatus for applying a coating to the warmed food product, wherein the apparatus comprises at least one wheel for transferring the coating from a first container to a second container positioned for holding at least a portion of the coating prior to deposition of the coating on the food product.~~

Claim 66 (Canceled)

67. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the first container is positioned below the second container such that the wheel lifts the coating from the first container to the second container.

Claim 68. (Canceled)

69. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 65 ~~68~~, wherein coating from the first container is capable of at least partially coating the outer surfaces of both disks and at least partially filling the inner space between the two disks as the wheel is rotated.

Claim 70. (Canceled)

71. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 65 ~~70~~, wherein the second container comprises a first protrusion extending at least partially into the inner space between the two disks.

72. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 71, wherein the second container comprises a second protrusion adjacent to the outer face of the first disk and a third protrusion adjacent to the outer face of the second disk.

73. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 65 ~~68~~, wherein the second container comprises slots for insertion of each disk, such that as the disk rotates through the second container, coating is removed from the outer surface of both disks and deposited in the second container.

74. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 65 ~~66~~, further comprising a second wheel, the second wheel comprising at least two coaxial disks, wherein the two disks of the

second wheel are spaced apart to form an inner space, and wherein the two outer faces of each disk comprise at least a portion of the outer surface of the second wheel.

75. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the second container comprises a trough.

76. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the second container comprises an opening adapted to allow a portion of the coating to flow from the second container.

77. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the opening is adapted to allow a portion of the coating to flow from the second container as a thin curtain of coating.

78. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, further comprising a conveyor to transport at least one food product beneath the second container.

79. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the food product comprises a dough-based product.

80. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the food product comprises doughnuts.

81. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the coating comprises a sugar-based coating.
82. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the coating comprises a glaze mixture.
83. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the transfer of the coating from the first container to the second container provides a visual display which may be viewed by an observer.
84. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 83, wherein the visual display comprises a feature which may be displayed in a retail setting.
85. (New) An apparatus for applying a coating to a food product comprising:
a first container for storing the coating;
a second container for holding at least a portion of the coating prior to deposition of the coating on the food product and comprising at least two slots; and
at least one wheel comprising at least two coaxial disks, wherein the two disks are spaced apart to form an inner space, and wherein the two outer faces of each disk comprise at least a portion of the outer surface of the wheel, and wherein at least a portion of the wheel is positioned in the first container and at least a portion of the wheel is positioned proximate at least a portion of the second container such that upon rotation of the wheel, a first coaxial

disk rotates through a first slot in the second container, a second coaxial disk rotates through a second slot in the second container, and coating from the first container is removed from the outer surfaces of both disks and the inner space between the disks and is deposited in the second container.

86. (New) The apparatus of claim 85, further comprising a conveyor to transport at least one food product beneath the second container.

87. (New) The apparatus of claim 85, wherein the food product comprises a dough-based product.

88. (New) The apparatus of claim 85, further comprising a water jacket that surrounds at least a portion of the first container.

89. (New) The apparatus of claim 88, wherein the water jacket is adapted to maintain the temperature of a coating positioned in the first container.

90. (New) The apparatus of claim 85, further comprising a second wheel, the second wheel comprising at least two coaxial disks, wherein the two disks of the second wheel are spaced apart to form an inner space, and wherein the two outer faces of each disk comprise at least a portion of the outer surface of the second wheel.

91. (New) The apparatus of claim 85, wherein the second container comprises an opening adapted to allow at least a portion of the coating to exit from the second container.
92. (New) The apparatus of claim 85, wherein the coating comprises a sugar-based coating.
93. (New) The apparatus of claim 85, wherein the wheel comprises a spacer that is positioned between the two disks.
94. (New) The apparatus of claim 85, wherein the second container is adapted to transfer coating to at least one food product in excess and wherein the first container is positioned to receive the excess coating from the second container.
95. (New) An apparatus for the preparation of food products comprising:
a heating unit for warming a pre-cooked food product; and
the apparatus of claim 85.
96. (New) An apparatus for applying a coating to a food product comprising:
a first container for storing the coating;
a water jacket surrounding at least a portion of the first container;
a second container for holding at least a portion of the coating prior to deposition of the coating on the food product; and

at least one wheel comprising at least two coaxial disks, wherein the two disks are spaced apart to form an inner space, and wherein the two outer faces of each disk comprise at least a portion of the outer surface of the wheel, and wherein at least a portion of the wheel is positioned in the first container and at least a portion of the wheel is positioned proximate at least a portion of the second container such that upon rotation of the wheel, the wheel transfers coating from the first container to the second container.

97. (New) The apparatus of claim 96, wherein the water jacket is adapted to maintain the temperature of a coating positioned in the first container.

98. (New) The apparatus of claim 96, further comprising a conveyor to transport at least one food product beneath the second container.

99. (New) The apparatus of claim 96, wherein the food product comprises a dough-based product.

100. (New) The apparatus of claim 96, wherein the second container comprises an opening adapted to allow at least a portion of the coating to exit from the second container.

101. (New) The apparatus of claim 96, wherein the coating comprises a sugar-based coating.

102. (New) The apparatus of claim 96, wherein the wheel comprises a spacer that is positioned between the two disks.
103. (New) The apparatus of claim 96, wherein the second container is adapted to transfer coating to at least one food product in excess and wherein the first container is positioned to receive the excess coating from the second container.
104. (New) An apparatus for the preparation of food products comprising:
a heating unit for warming a pre-cooked food product; and
the apparatus of claim 96.
105. (New) An apparatus for applying a coating to a food product comprising:
a first container for storing the coating;
a second container for holding at least a portion of the coating prior to deposition of the coating on the food product;
a first wheel comprising at least two coaxial disks, wherein the two disks are spaced apart to form an inner space, and wherein the two outer faces of each disk comprise at least a portion of the outer surface of the first wheel, and wherein at least a portion of the first wheel is positioned in the first container and at least a portion of the first wheel is positioned proximate at least a portion of the second container such that upon rotation of the second wheel, the second wheel transfers coating from the first container to the second container;
and

a second wheel comprising at least two coaxial disks, wherein the two disks are spaced apart to form an inner space, and wherein the two outer faces of each disk comprise at least a portion of the outer surface of the second wheel, and wherein at least a portion of the second wheel is positioned in the first container and at least a portion of the second wheel is positioned proximate at least a portion of the second container such that upon rotation of the second wheel, the second wheel transfers coating from the first container to the second container.

106. (New) The apparatus of claim 105, further comprising at least one additional wheel comprising at least two coaxial disks, wherein the two disks are spaced apart to form an inner space, and wherein the two outer faces of each disk comprise at least a portion of the outer surface of the at least one additional wheel.

107. (New) The apparatus of claim 105, further comprising a conveyor to transport at least one food product beneath the second container.

108. (New) The apparatus of claim 105, wherein the food product comprises a dough-based product.

109. (New) The apparatus of claim 105, further comprising a water jacket that surrounds at least a portion of the first container.

110. (New) The apparatus of claim 109, wherein the water jacket is adapted to maintain the temperature of a coating positioned in the first container.

111. (New) The apparatus of claim 105, wherein the first container comprises a divider positioned to divide the first container into a first sub-container and a second sub-container, wherein at least a portion of the first wheel is positioned in the first sub-container and wherein at least a portion of the second wheel is positioned in the second sub-container.

112. (New) The apparatus of claim 111, wherein the divider comprises a closable port adapted to allow mixing of the contents of each sub-container.

113. (New) The apparatus of claim 105, wherein the second container comprises a panel to divide the second container into a first sub-trough and a second sub-trough, wherein at least a portion of the first wheel is positioned proximate at least part of the first sub-trough and wherein at least a portion of the second wheel is positioned proximate at least part of the second sub-trough.

114. (New) The apparatus of claim 113, wherein the second container comprises a slot into which the panel is inserted.

115. (New) The apparatus of claim 105, wherein the second container comprises an opening adapted to allow at least a portion of the coating to exit from the second container.

116. (New) The apparatus of claim 105, wherein the coating comprises a sugar-based coating.

117. (New) An apparatus for the preparation of food products comprising:
a heating unit for warming a pre-cooked product; and
the apparatus of claim 105.